

LR 7CA. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Elmer, please, then Senator Schmit.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. President, I won't take very much time. I feel relatively optimistic about southwest Nebraska and western Nebraska supporting this kind of an amendment. In a survey that I distributed to all of you members, one of the questions that I asked citizens out there, was the compensation being granted the state legislators adequate, and the return was that less than 30 percent thought it was adequate. A good majority thought that we should have a raise. Given good input from organizations, I think we have a good chance of success on one of those resolutions that we are going to consider this morning, and I would urge your support. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schmit, then Senator Wesely.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I would just like to say that I don't know if I will support the resolution or not and I will tell you why. For many years we have heard the comments about the legislative pay. I appreciate very much the efforts of Senator William Barrett to improve the salary for legislators but I would recognize that if this salary of \$12,000 goes into the Constitution that it will remain there for another 20 or 30 years in that same capacity. And younger legislators who are coming after me will be tied into the same kind of a fiscal situation which many individuals find themselves bound to at the present time. My principal interest would be to take it out of the Constitution. I think that is the only way to go and I know it is a difficult situation but it is absolutely ridiculous that it goes for 20 years in the same kind of a position, in the same kind of a situation. I think it has been pretty well recognized that individually the constituencies support each of us but collectively we seem to have somewhat of a poor image. I told one of my friends, who is in the newspaper business, who pointed out that they have always supported adequate legislative pay, I said, you know, it doesn't make any sense for you to support it editorially every two years or every four years, to come out and say, well, the legislators deserve adequate pay, when day after day after day in one manner or another, the Legislature is not treated with any kind of respect. Now I would concede there are some times perhaps that we encourage some criticism, and that is human nature, human